29,
Fitzroy Square,
W.

August 2
1907

Dear Violet,

I was only for a Sunday at Cleeve - came back feel busy Monday to make room for the sister, nurses & doctors. Nina seemed very well — very happy. Sitting all day with Chris. Jan

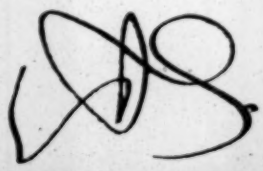
alone here till I go on
Thursday, as Tolson has
gone down to Camp
Shall I see you?
What the D—— I go on
by your allusions to
Fanshawe I don't know.
I am corresponding with
the editor who writes
12 sheets to the Times
pointing out his virtues.
The Times by & by reading my
reviews with the greatest
pleasure. Such is the
power in the literary world!
Come & work. AHH.

29,
Fitzroy Square,
W.

August 1907

My Violet,

Here is the work, very hastily polished off this morning. Indeed it is a hasty job altogether: however you and Nelly are to be the only readers. Read from here this morning that she feels extremely weak — the sickness is quite stopped. This services me: and, as you say "your affection is wholly selfish" O woman with a tongue dripping lived poison!



~~1908~~ ?

29,
Fitzroy Square,
W.

August 1907.?

My Violet,

It was very tender & kind of you to write. One feels so ossified; there is a v. hard to go on, & the pain is always the same, I think. Still so odd the way you remember that However, my great relief is to be happy - I really Cara very much that Adrian should be happy - delight as I am. I am sitting among shrouded chairs,

smoking a cigarette, before
I go to catch my train
the country will be a
delight. Our address is
The Steps
Plaxden
Nr Surrey.

NYPL

I think B. comes
tomorrow, with Alison.
Shall you write to me?

L.

August 27 Rye.

1907 I Sunday

My Violet,

You drive me to write. O melancholy Creature! why do you use specialists? I wish to God you would not. What you want, probably, is air & food & good society; here you should have a couch beneath an apple tree, & sometimes I would sing to you, & sometimes I would keep from branch to branch, & sometimes I would recite, my own work, to the Zephyrs.

There comes a time, you see, when condolences are no use; I can't figure to myself any fate so miserable as yours — & except that I daresay you pass it in paying visits; & your house is your own house, & there are books, — ah the thing that you hate! I suppose. You see how came I'm getting. Nelly wrote & told me: all I can say is, why do you see doctors?

They are a profoundly untrustworthy race;
either they lie, or they mistake -
Stella. You will say, what the D[evil] does she
know what it is to have a pain in the
back - The worst thing about that little
black devil is that she can't sympathise,
once you get her off her paper & her own
spirits she feels nothing. Now, dirty devil
(for your tongue is not a strong - comes bubbling
from the deep natural spring) answer me.
Walk then, we went & had tea with
Henry James today, & Henry James fixed me
on the Golf club: & Henry James fixed me
with his staring blank eye - it is like
a child's marble - & said "My dear Virginia,
they tell me - they tell me - they tell me -
that you - as indeed being your father's daughter
may your grandfather's & grandchild - the
descendant I may say of a century -
of quill pen & ink - ink - ink - pots,
yes, yes, yes, they tell me - ahmmm - that
you, that you, that you write in short."
This went on in the public street, while
we all waited, as farmers wait for the hen to
lay an egg - Do they? - nervous, polite, -
now on this point now on that. I feel

like a condemned person, who sees the knife
drop & strike & drop again. Never did
any woman hate 'writing' as much as I do.
But when I am old & famous I shall
discourse like Henry James. "We had to
stop periodically to let his shaker himself
free of the thing; he made phrases over
the bread & butter 'mid & rapid' it was,
& told us all the scandal of Rye." But
Jones has eloped, I regret to say, to Tasmania;
leaving 12 little Jones, & a poor but 13th
to Mrs Jones; most regrettable, most
unfortunate, & yet not wholly an affair to
which one can give no private key. Jones can go to
Spain.

Well - this leaves now to interest you: Great
Barking Sultan: if you could see how
painfully I drive a pen, which confesses itself
a martyr to the sleepy stagger. You
might pity me. But I don't think you
would; for you have a chagrin about
the enjoyment your gifts; how it is a
trust, with income payable to - so & so -
so & so. Some doubt is
felt, by those who read your last letter,
& enfolded the curling tendrils, up as to
whether you touched for a picture post card

of Rye, a such rude figure as I can make with words. For one moment I thought you wished me to draw, which indeed I could do, having already designed many triangles surmounted by oblong boxes, which are ornamented with Christian crosses, in my blotting paper already. From our garden we look over a dead marsh; flat as the sea, & the similie has the more truth in that the sea was once where the marsh is now. But at night a whole flowerbed of fitful lighthouses bloom — O what a sentimental! — but irritants are good I am told — along the sad edge; indeed you can follow the sea all round the cliff in what we stand, till you perceive Rye floating out to meet it, letting stranded halfway in the shingle, like — nothing so much as a red brick town. But then red brick towns dont float; so these semi metaphors Your are a proof that you dip hastily into a pocket full of words, & fling out the first come; & that is why Your writing is so . . . . "

Anyhow, we have a real country cottage — whole wales, & bright pictures, & cheerful manly books. Stevenson & Thoreau, & it a

garden, & an orchard; I dont really enjoy
anything of these things; it bores me
dreadfully to cut the flowers, & I dont
determined that Mrs. Dew Smith is a
vague weak shallow kind of person;
who has realised all her dream- of
this house, & will be told for ever, how
charming it is, & how clever she is.
Gerald has been here today; my spirits
Spring like fire now that he is gone;
Adrian & I had the heaviest work; for
We ran out of talk on the way
up from the Station, & then we each took
turns with a question, till when it came
to mine I could only say "What do
you usually have for lunch on Sunday
Gerald?" which however was best left,
for he remembered the lunches of 20
years ago "O more puffs! not
short pastry but puff pastry- There
was no dish, my dear, just black at
the bottom, ash flaky, done with
more butter than she use now- what
I shall remember till my dying day"
Then We talked about beef; & at last
he fell asleep; as a prize pig, well

Entertained might sleep. This is brutal,
because he took a great deal of trouble
to come; & I should be affectionate.
Nessa comes to morrow - what one calls
Nessa; but it means husband & baby, -
& Sister Nessa is less than Nessa used to be.
But perhaps it is better; so the Jansens say.
We are having Katherine Stephen for 2
nights, & Jean Lamb & Sydney Turner; but
I shall read & write, & only occasionally
Expose myself to their wisdom - I have
7 volumes of poetic drama to review
for the Guardian, - a novel for the
Times. & I want to write out many
small chapters that form in my head; -
to read Pindar, & to a mass of other books;
I know I shant. I begin to understand
just I never shall.. You will
probably suffer from many long, diffuse, egotistical
ill written, disconnected, delightful letters,
because, solitary as I am, & fertile as a
tea pot, it becomes necessary to empty the
brew on some one; & pure fun are recumbent
at Walwyn - what more can you expect, my
good Woman. "Those tiresome Stephens."
Ellas Ellas only Epigram.
Ellas Epigram.

V W

The Steps

Sunday.
1st Sept 1907.

The Steps
Hayden.

My Violet.

I think few acts more deserve admiration than this which I now undertake of my own accord; for I dont know how many sheets I sent you ~~I sent you~~ the other day, — I have had no answer but a growling letter asking - nay, demanding, a post card. If you would do me a favour - you Bio - or Mytho - Graphic, tell me why you want letters, what you get from them, what you miss without them - in short, explain the whole situation; because I may be feeding an impure hunger. Lord, I wish I could make this pen write this paper; I bought them both, for love of you, in Rye; or the discord is

MS.

painful at every step. I consider now
what here is to tell for, if that is what
I'm want; how I haven't moved from
Rye since I came here, how the French
are still on the other side of the channel,
how certain stars still hang
above me at night, & the moon is
steady. But I don't care a
b——y d——n (my violet, what
language - even discombobulated thus!)
for banalities however literary & picturesque;
& if I could so fashion this globe & my
own accident as to pack it hermetically
within the sheet I would hint it
out & place at breakfast, ask Ozzie to
put it behind the bookshelf, & talk
about something else.
Chris are here, & Snow is with them, &
we meet every day, to walk, or smoke, &
talk together; once we took a bike to &
Church & a lift — that was on Thursday
when we had Sapajou Stephen with us;
once we had the Prospero's & Henry James
to tea on the verandah here; & here
was that talk — as for myself here this
very afternoon in the lounge. Now I have

sketched the situation; placing all my pieces
in position, & a woman's imagination
scarcely put them in motion for herself.
Father, I write in the morning & read Pindar,
in a room which overlooks the Marsh; beneath
Adrian takes notes in English History, & spells out
Wagner on the piano. Once more, I have
a letter from B. Richmond asking me to
review a novel by Maarten Maartens at once,
at some length, for Friday's Times; & a
letter from Leo, in which he says that he
is "constantly trying to think of subjects
which would be likely to appeal to you".
& is open to any suggestions.
Now my author's vanity is appeased, shall we
hint that it was the pricking of this that
made me write to you! O no; it was
affection, boiling, like that pasty meat we'd
to boil in Athens. You really
don't give me a chance to be unselfish; I
can't - literary plans, fabled - fill the page
with questions - do you sleep, eat, suffer pain?
& you won't write, & I must write to you,
& the only thing then is to write about it -
well you if ain't neuter anyhow.
Katherine Stepney stayed 2 nights; & it
was like sleeping on the bosom of a maternal
cow, cool wholesome, not too soft, but
fragrant. She has a smoother surface than
the rest of the race, as though rubbed down

by the attrition of countless human bodies;
but her meltt les in deep places, & so
issues fresh & sweet, like something kept in a
shaded cavern, packed in ice. She asked
me to stay with her; & used at odd
moments after the day, to remark that she felt
happy. Margaret Lyttelton cant come; but
that was not unexpected: Lamb comes on Friday,
& then Sydney Turner. Vesa is
like a great child. more happy & serene than
ever; sketching with snow, draped in a
long robe of crimson, or raspberry coloured
silk, with clear drops of amethyst &
thing she calls 'cairngorm' about it, & old
yellow lace. To be with her is
to sit in autumn sunlight; but then there is
Clive! NYPL Snow denied here last night, &
say they are completely suited - Completely
happy. It bears in upon me more -
more that we are all so much dry or
green wood, prone to the flame; & it
dont much matter to that portent what it
feeds on: it is "transmutes". how I
must set myself down to my novel, & then to
my poetic drama; Shall I ever hear
a Child / wonder? Adrian - I
think of getting fifty or Square, & living in town,
to escape the burden of a household.
How am I, in this hasty & poor, to answer to
all my devotions, & Enquiries - how go on, what
you do, & the rest of it? It cant be done.
So, kiss your Dog on its tender snout, & think
him me. In fact, make him into an Idol your
, will to worship the hallows